



AetherCon

November  
15-17, 2013

Convention  
Program

# Table of Contents

THANKS	2
Q & A: D3 ADVENTURES	3
PRIZE HALL	5
Q & A: CATALYST GAME LABS	7
VENDORS HALL	9
Q & A: CHRONICLE CITY	11
FEST HALL	13
Q & A: FAINTING GOAT GAMES	15
Q & A: OBATRON PRODUCTIONS	17
FRIENDS	19
Q & A: ELDRITCH ENTERPRISES	22
CREDITS	24

Cover Art by Jeremy McHugh



# ABOUT AETHERCON

The 2nd annual AetherCon Online Tabletop RPG Convention is a gathering of pen and paper roleplaying gamers that will take place in cyberspace on the weekend of November 15-17/2013.

AetherCon is a free to attend, free to partake, non-profit initiative. Throughout the weekend there will be a plethora of tabletop RPGs on offer for all to play in. Among those will be three, three part tournaments taking place over the three days of the event with final tables to be played on Sunday. All games will be run on the free, browser-based virtual table tops INFRNO and Roll20. These programs will allow GMs and players alike to simply click on a link and enter the playing area as opposed to needing to download and install the software to participate.

In addition to the collection of independent RPG playing opportunities and those run by RPG publishers, there will also be Q&As and themed panels using the free, browser based conferencing program Anymeeting. A further highlight of the event is original artwork that will be released periodically in the run-up to our event as free downloadable wallpapers. Convention attendees will have the opportunity to purchase prints of these and other works, attend live tutorials as well as speed painting duels by those artists during AetherCon.

Our goal as organizers of this undertaking is to provide Online RPGers as a whole with a common stamping ground for a weekend in the spirit of the traditional tribal moot. Historically during these gatherings, which took place in a mutually agreed upon location, trading, discussion and various contests among other things took place under a truce between all attending. It is our hope that this undertaking will also prove to be a way for gamers of all stripes and all places to meet up and celebrate our favourite hobby together.

## AETHERCON THANKS:



# Q&A With D3 ADVENTURES

## 1) Can you tell me a little about yourselves as a gamer and as a game industry professional?

Man, I am horrible at talking about myself. I've been a gamer since '77 when I got my first Atari. I was exposed to D&D in '78 and created my first RPG the next day from notes my friend and I cribbed from his brothers books (he wouldn't let us play, saying we were too young). In '81 my mom bought me the Basic D&D box set as a graduation present from 6<sup>th</sup> grade. I've been modifying, playing and running games ever since. I have a knack for finding a niche game system, falling in love with it and then realizing that nobody else, or a very small number of folks, enjoys it. My fav systems are Hero System and Rolemaster.

## 2) How did you get your start in the RPG industry?

In 1999 my roommate at the time and myself created a Mod for Tribes called Chivalry, a fan gave us some money as an angel investor to begin a video game company. In 2001 we formed Sojourn Development and started working on an MMO. That whole process fell apart in 2003 but I retained ownership of the design. In 2006 my wife convinced me to start up a new company and D3 Games was born. In 2010 we moved back to Houston and had to remake the company as D3 Adventures and that's where I am today.

## 3) Tell me about D3 Adventures – what should people know about your company?

We're small...very, very small. It's just myself and my wife, who handles all of the dollars. Our tagline pretty much explains our goals, "Forging Better Worlds For Better Games". My passion is in setting design and my goal is to create, either full cloth or through idea seeds turned over to other authors, settings that are interesting, unique, playable and, most important to me, believable. We have an erratic release schedule due to myself and all of my contractors having day jobs, but we're working on getting better at consistent release dates with upcoming product lines.

## 4) Tell me about Aethercon – for those who don't know about it, what is it? What's awesome about it?

Aethercon is an online convention. Started up by Stephen Holodinsky. It seems to me to be a natural outgrowth of the online gaming community, from play-by-post (my personal savior) to electronic tabletops, gaming is moving more and more towards the digital kitchen table. Aethercon is a great way to celebrate this and is able to do it for free. We're all

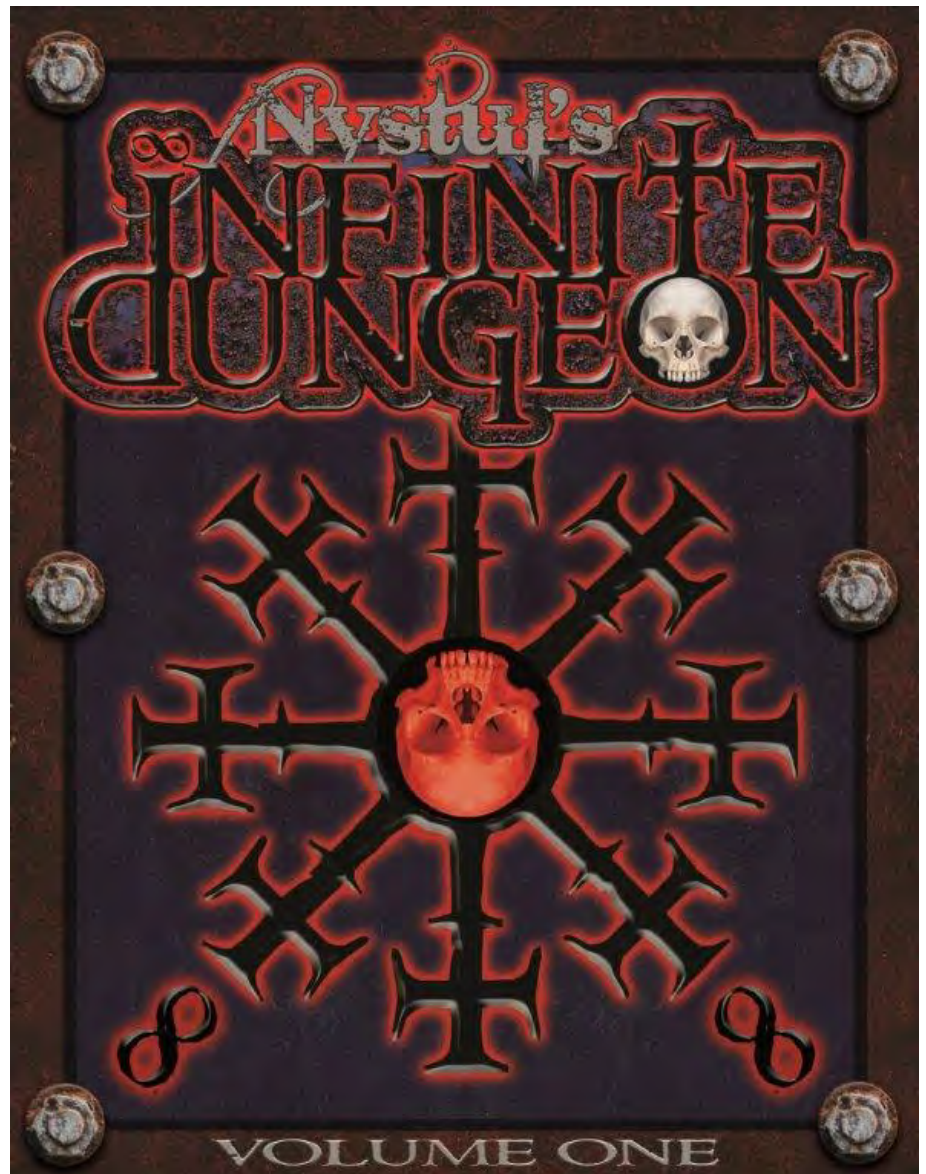
volunteers who love the concept and want to see it grow into an international phenomenon.

## 5) What do you think gamers are looking forward to most about Aethercon?

Hm, that's difficult for me to say. I'd like to say that the mix of panels and a chance to meet and socialize with a wide variety of online gamers would be the pull, but that doesn't exactly limit it to a specific thing...it's pretty much the entirety of Aethercons existence. ☺

## 6) I'm very pleased that D3 Adventures is helping keep the torch burning for the Hero System with several products and upcoming releases (my good friend Michael Surbrook has written some books for you on this!). Can you tell me about what you love about the Hero System, and what else may be in the works for fellow HERO-philes?

Oh man, I love Hero System. It can do anything. It allows



me the freedom to create the mechanics for whatever I want to represent and remain internally consistent without having to turn to houserules or shoehorn my concept into a rigid architecture. Most other game systems do their game systems well, but break as soon as you want to represent something else. Hero doesn't do that. It's a toolkit as they say and it freakin' rocks. Unfortunately, it isn't as popular as I would like so releasing more products for it is secondary at this point in time. I released Kamarathin as a 5E Hero System setting, got an award for Best Writing, and released a conversion for 6E for it. Everyone that has picked it up have said good things about it, but even still, it didn't sell enough to cover the costs of its manufacture. That hurt the pocket book. So right now I'm focusing on releasing system agnostic mini-adventures and I have several Pathfinder product lines in development. One of which, Irshaa, will be kickstarted and one of the goals will be to release a Hero System version as well. I bought the IP for USA-50 and I want to re-release it for M&M3 as well as Hero System with new art and better layout, but that's going to have to wait until after the release of the Infinite Dungeon, Irshaa and the Campaign Toybox lines.

**7) How has your perception of working professionally in the RPG industry changed over the last 5 years?**

I did not know what the hell I was doing. Pure and simple. I originally got into this to release Kamarathin and focus exclusively on it. Thinking I could just settle into my little fantasy setting and with Hero System and be profitable or at least break even. HA! Man, I cannot even remember the amount of things I didn't know back then that I should have before I began. Every single month has been a brand new learning experience, some shocking, some incredibly disheartening, but most have been fantastic. For someone with zero experience in the publishing industry it has been one heck of a rollercoaster and our earlier products and present erratic releases are all prime examples of this. I wouldn't trade it for the world. Right now, I've got to the point where I need to focus. I've tried to do too many things in the name of diversification and it has held us back. I've left the world of idealistic system niche's and will be expanding into the world of the popular market place until I get this company in a financially stable enough place that I can revisit my love of niche systems.

**8) If you could change one thing about the RPG industry, what would it be?**

Hm, if you had asked me this a few years ago, I would have said takedown the big corporations and keep it a craftsman industry. But after seeing the rise of Paizo and the consistently quality work they release (despite my misgivings about the D20/3.x systems) and the new iteration of D&D Next; I have to say, that maybe the industry is actually listening to its fans again and that is a good thing. Will wait and see if this trend continues, and I really hope it does.

**9) What does the future hold for you guys? For D3 Adventures, Aethercon, or your own personal gaming projects?**

Professionally I'm focusing focusing D3 Adventures on five product lines; Irshaanic Confluence, Infinite Dungeon,

Tangents, Spectral Earth and Campaign Toybox. Keeping the priority on Pathfinder and Mutants & Masterminds 3E as well as systemless releases. I'm keeping Hero System possibilities in the background as finances allow. For Aethercon, I'm focusing on my minor role as prize monkey and making sure those that participate receive their just desserts. Personally, I'm trying to get into face-2-face gaming more. I currently have three play-by-post campaigns and one face-to-face game (every 3 weeks or so) that are all using my bastard creation of Rolemaster, Pathfinder and Houserules that I call Jasonmaster...because, well, I'm humble. But it's a fun exercise in refining, massaging and creating game rules, a practice I had stopped once I got back into Hero System. I have ideas for a game system in my notes that I touch upon every now and then and may, in the far distant future release.

## THE INFINITE DUNGEON

For centuries, the Cursed Isle opened its port to bands of adventurers - those brave or foolhardy souls that wished to test themselves against the terrors of the fabled Infinite Dungeon.

Then the fragile balance preserved by the island's Wardens was shattered. The wards of the Dungeon failed, its denizens set free to ravage the Cursed Isle. Though the escape was quelled, the Isle was forbidden to any who wished to dare its dangers, ships turned away...if they could find the mist-shrouded prison at all. The Cursed Isle and its Dungeon were forgotten by all but a few obscure scholars.

But now rumor tells that the Wardens seek new recruits, that worthy souls are being allowed to venture forth to the Cursed Isle once more. But none can say what has happened to the Isle, its Wardens, or the Infinite Dungeon in the years since the Great Revolt.

Are you prepared for what lies ahead? Do you dare face the horrors of the Cursed Isle?

INFINI+E DANGER

INFINI+E ADVENTURE

THE INFINI+E DUNGEON!



# PRIZE HALL





# Q&A WITH CATALYST GAMESLABS

## 1) What's going on with Battletech and A Time of War?

Battletech and its roleplaying companion, A Time of War, are moving forward and exploring exciting new directions. Alpha Strike, a streamlined version of the Battletech rules, was released in print form on October 9th and has been well received by the Battletech community. It makes Battletech more like a true miniatures game, faster to play and less reliant on hexes for movement.

We are working on bringing the Battletech Introductory Box Set back into print with better-quality miniatures so that people can have an easier time of jumping into the universe of giant stompy robots.

A Time of War Companion came out late last year and has added all sorts of new options for A Time of War players, including new martial arts and other advanced rulesets, along with ways to convert characters from previous MechWarrior role-playing games to this version of the game.

## 2) Battletech exists outside its board game roots. Has it been hard to make sure that all the different medias don't fly off in different direction?

Yeah, it is occasionally a challenge to try to keep the feel of the game and the storyline consistent across all the different properties. In the current incarnations, though, the other content creators have been great about coordinating with us so that we can maintain that consistent feel that helps the properties feel unified.

## 3) How has the response been to Cosmic Patrol?

Very enthusiastic. People who play it tend to have a lot of fun unleashing their creativity, jumping into the rockets, rayguns, and robots setting with great energy and zest and creating memorable, off-the-wall stories. Hearing about the crazy turns people's games have taken is one of the highlights of Gen Con. The latest

Cosmic Patrol book, a campaign book called The Moon Must Be Ours, was released in print on September 25th.

## 4) Shadowrun has kind of exploded in the last year with a couple of video games, a card game and an upcoming miniatures game. Any thoughts on why everything now?

Some of it is just good fortune--we had a lot of great partners, such as Fire Opal, who worked on the card game Shadowrun: Crossfire, Harebrained Schemes who released Shadowrun Returns, and Cliffhanger Productions who is working on Shadowrun Online, who all approached us at about the same time. We also had an interest in introducing people to Shadowrun in as many ways as possible so they could have fun in a setting that we love. We might have been a little ambitious in all we wanted to do, but we feel Shadowrun deserves it, since we love playing in the Sixth World!

## 5) Any word on the miniatures game? Possible Kickstarter?

The rules are out to their latest, and possibly final, playtesting cycle. Once that cycle is over, we'll start focusing seriously on production and the best ways to bring the game out (we have some great mini designs that we're dying to see in 3D). We haven't made any final decisions about that part of the process, but a Kickstarter is a possibility.

## 6) Any chance we will ever see a Shadowrun Lite for the people scared of all the crunch in the current versions of Shadowrun?

Absolutely! We have a Shadowrun Introductory Box Set that is just about ready to go to print. It greatly simplifies the rules, making it so players and gamemasters can crack open a box and dive in right away. We're excited to give players a chance to get

## TEN MINUTES IN THE FUTURE, TEN SECONDS FROM DEATH

Welcome to the Sixth World. Megacorporations dominate the world. Dragons prowl the skies—and corporate boardrooms. Magicians sling fire and lightning, ice and acid. Hackers break into the darkest corners of the Matrix, digging out secrets while risking feedback that could fry their synapses. And people on the edge of society, those who have been pushed into the shadows, fight to stay free.

You're one of those people. You are a shadowrunner. You live in the dark recesses of society, doing things no one else will do—things no one else *can* do. Uncovering secrets, removing people from sensitive positions, stealing bleeding-edge prototypes, and occasionally taking out someone who really needs to be dead.

The *Shadowrun Introductory Box Set* is the easiest way to get involved in the intrigue, grit, and action of one of the most enduring role-playing settings of all time. The box has all you need to play a game of *Shadowrun*, including:

- A compact rulebook designed to be accessible and simple to use.
- Adventures to provide several hours of gaming fun.
- A world book to give the flavor and background of the *Shadowrun* setting.
- Pre-generated characters players can use to jump right into an adventure.
- Maps to help players and gamemasters keep track of the action.

*Grab your dice, pack your gear, and get ready to survive the worst the world can throw at you. If you shoot straight, watch your back, and conserve ammo, you can make yourself more than a shadowrunner—you can be a legend.*



their hands on this! In the meantime, we have the free Shadowrun Quick-Start Rules, which give you a fast and easy way to get a taste of roleplaying in the Shadowrun setting. It's available for free at [shadowruntabletop.com](http://shadowruntabletop.com).

**7) Will there be an RPG set in the Leviathans setting?**

Possibly! We're focused first on getting the core game back into print, but after that an RPG is certainly a possibility for future expansions in the universe. We don't have concrete plans in that direction yet, though.

**8) A few of your games are using Creative Commons licensing. What's Catalyst's rationale over traditional copyright?**

What we've seen is that giving players a chance to be involved in a setting and exercise their creativity gives them more potential to fully express themselves and make the setting as fun as possible. Also, lowering the bar to help people jump into a setting can expand participation, which is good for everyone involved in a game, including the producers. On top of that is the fact that gaming, especially role-playing gaming, is an inherently collaborative activity, so honoring that collaborative spirit and giving players a chance to be truly involved in the game seems very appropriate.

**9) eBooks are the new hotness now, but can you see a future where people download a module into a virtual tabletop instead of a PDF?**

Yes, that's a possibility. We've looked at this possibility

in a few ways, such as possibly designing Missions that can be used in Lone Wolf Development's upcoming Realm Works software or designing specific "Catalyst approved" adventures for use with the Shadowrun Returns video game. We'll keep playing with the tech tools that are out there to see how they can enhance the game-playing experience.

**10) Does Catalyst have any new projects in the pipeline?**

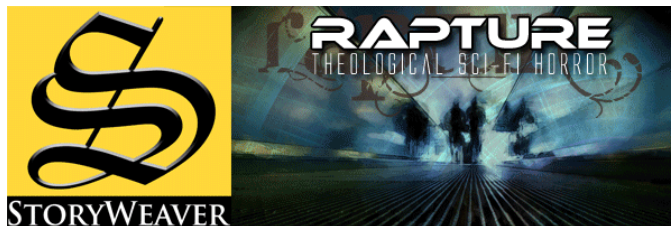
Always! We're very excited about our new abstract board game, The Duke, which is something like a more tactical version of chess that requires flexibility and thinking on the fly. The base game and several expansions are out now (bringing Mustketeers, Conan, Robin Hood characters and more onto the playing field), with more to come. There are plenty of Shadowrun products in the works, including the Introductory Box Set and Shadowrun: Crossfire, the deck-building game, and Run & Gun, an advanced combat sourcebook. Battletech players will get a lot of resources to enhance their playing in the 3145 era, including Technical Readout: 3145, Technical Readout: 3145 The Clans, and Field Report: 3145. We're also very excited about our recently announced deal to work on a Bravest Warrior card game, and we hope to share more information about that in the near future!



# VENDOR8 HALL









# Q&A WITH CHRONICLE CITY

## **1. Tell us a little about yourself and how did you get into gaming?**

I started playing the Fighting Fantasy gamebooks by Ian Livingstone and Steve Jackson (the founders of Games Workshop) back in the early 80's in the UK. When I moved to the States to live with my cousins for a bit they introduced me to actual RPGs. Like many at the time I started off with D&D but also played Top Secret within a couple of weeks of discovering it. When I moved back to the UK I arrived with my own copies of the DMG and PHB and soon started adding D&D, AD&D and other books and games (such as ICE's MERP) to my collection.

Luckily a store opened up near to where I lived (Leisure Games, which I ended up becoming a 'Saturday boy' at and then went fulltime after leaving school and worked and managed the shop for just over 23 years!) so that just fed the addiction further ;)

I got involved with a number of UK magazines (The Adventurer; Roleplayer Independent; Valkyrie, etc) and also did quite a bit of playtesting for companies such as White Wolf and Steve Jackson Games. A group of friends and I released a small indie dark future miniatures skirmish/RPG crossbreed in the early 90's called 'Dark Winter' that sold a few thousand copies in the UK and that just fed my desire to run a publishing company. In 2003 I started a company called 'Cubicle 7 Entertainment' which I ran in my spare time until we managed to get hold of the RPG licenses for both Doctor Who and Lord of the Rings – at which point I, and my then business partner Dominic, looked for funding and took the company fulltime so we could concentrate on making sure the games got the attention and backing they needed and deserved. I left Cubicle 7 in December 2011 and started Chronicle City .

## **2. What RPG setting do you personally prefer?**

I have a revolving wheel of favourite games. The number one spot is usually filled by Call of Cthulhu, but my top 5 or top 10 is in constant flux. There are so many I love. Deadlands, the old TSR Marvel FASERIP system, Amber, TORG, Kult, Victoriana, etc.

## **3. So how did the idea of Chronicle City come about?**

I'd previously started and run another games company (Cubicle 7) and had wanted to run a publishing company pretty much ever since I left school so when I left C7 starting a new publishing and design company was pretty much the only thing I was intending to do.

I love games and can't really see myself doing anything else. Chronicle City allows me to help create and publish games, look at bringing back some great games which have been out of print for sometime, license great settings from other sources such as TV, novels, etc, and turn them into games and also help other designers and studios bring their creations into print and distribution through our Print Partnership Program.

## **4. So just who are the personnel behind the scenes at Chronicle City?**

Chronicle City is a small team. I run the day-to-day aspects of the business as well as licensing, the print partnership program, etc. Gobion looks after print production – making sure the books are in the correct format, etc, for the printers to accept and print, James is our inhouse writer and line developer – coming up with new game concepts and working on developing those and other lines that we have in the works, and T.R. is our Community Co-ordinator – looking after our website, social media, conventions, demo teams and other community aspects.

## **5. Who are some of the companies that Chronicle City has worked with in the recent past?**

We work with a lot of partners – over 30 different studios – although not all of them have been announced or had books released as yet. Some of those include the ENNIES Award Winners such as Modiphius Entertainment (Achtung! Cthulhu; Mutant Chronicles 3rd Edition), Battlefield Press (Eldritch Skies) and Pantheon Press (Fortune's Fool). We've recently started working with Rite Publishing whom I've worked with before elsewhere, as well as Daring Entertainment, Gun Metal Games and Sixtystone Press. We also work with a number of non-English companies such as Uhrwerk Verlag & Ulisses (Germany), Wild Boar & Alephtar Games (Italy), Wicked World (Sweden) and a few that have yet to be announced from Spain, Poland and France.

## **6. What company would you like to see Chronicle City work with in the near future?**

There's so much talent in the games industry that there's quite a list of companies and people I'd like us to work with. We're always on the look out for cool and interesting games and also have a number of people contact us each month about partnerships or helping in other ways. I'm not going to single any specific company out, sorry ;)

## **7. What is Chronicle City's latest game and tell us a little about it.**

We should be releasing several new books each month – and I've got a backlist of books to release on file at present – so that's quite tricky. Some of the titles which will soon be hitting store shelves include Broken Shield (a sci-fi noir game based upon a series of novels by Gunnar Roxen), Cold & Dark (a dark horror sci-fi game in the vein of films such as Aliens, Event Horizon and Prometheus), Monsters & Magic (an old school fantasy game by Sarah Newton) and the 'Adventures in Kaphornia game series which is a series of stand-alone gamebooks aimed at introducing new gamers to the hobby as well as providing a one-shot fix to GMs who don't have any preparation time – they are very much 'pick up and play' all-in-one books which were originally published in Germany and have done well over there. The first two titles in the series are 'Draconian Rhapsody' and 'Island of the Piranha Men'.

### 8. Do you prefer designing games or publishing games and which is harder in your opinion?

Designing games is much harder than publishing them. A lot of creativity and imagination goes into creating and designing the games – from the rules, the setting and the adventures you take people on. I love helping design games and being part of the creative process. Publishing is also hard, but I love being able to bring out the games that we're developing for people to read and play and also helping other designers get their creations out to a wider audience. Publishing can be very rewarding when you see people having fun in the worlds you've helped introduce them to, even if the monetary side can be quite hard at times.

### 9. In your opinion is the RPG industry stronger now with the introduction of RPG on PDFs?

Yes and no. The PDF market has opened up a much cheaper and easier gateway into the industry for people and new companies whilst offering a great new sales platform for existing and established companies. PDFs are also a lot easier to store and take around on your tablet, laptop, etc, which makes the days of carting around a ton of books a rose-tinted memory. However PDFs are a lot easier to copy and piracy can hurt the industry. The RPG industry is – on the whole – an industry that many work in for the love of the hobby and isn't swimming in money. For those trying to work fulltime in the industry pretty much every penny counts, so losing money by people actively pirating copies of their work does hurt and if it happens too often it could make the difference between them staying in the industry and releasing new games and supplements for people to play or having to get a different job and having less time to support the gaming side of their lives. Kickstarter has

obviously helped a lot there – as it allows most of the costs in game design and production to be covered which makes it more affordable (and certainly quicker) to produce new games, but physical sales are still very important alongside the electronic ones. It's a lot easier for someone to discover a new game browsing in a store or at a convention than it is coming across one randomly on a PDF selling platform.

### 10. What's in store for Chronicle City in the future?

We're working on catching up with our release schedule as many of the companies that have partnered with us have back catalogue titles that need to be rereleased as well as their new titles. We have to space our releases out (I don't think anyone would be pleased if we dropped 100 new titles on distributors, stores and fans in a couple of months – even if our bank account could afford to do that in the first place!) so have plenty to be getting on with ;)

We're also working on several new games that we're developing internally that should hopefully see the light of day next year, along with the first few card and board games that we've got ready. The Space: 1889 Kickstarter we ran in the summer did very well and is due out in January with a whole range of support planned throughout 2014 – and we've got another Kickstarter that we'll be launching after the core Space: 1889 book has been shipped to the backers. We in licensing discussions with a few companies, which I'm hoping will end positively and allow us to bring some new and exciting worlds to the RPG market (and hopefully also revive some that have been seen before). 2014 and 2015 should be very busy years for us with any luck.



**CHRONICLE CITY**  
The New Capital of Gaming

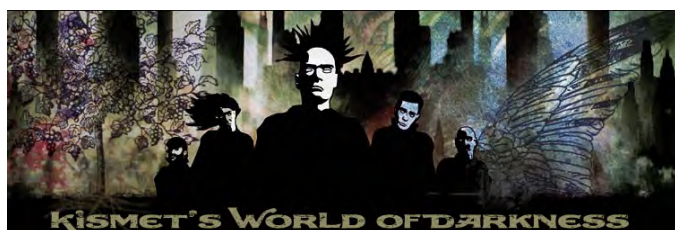
**WWW.CHRONICLECITY.COM**  
LOOK FOR THESE GREAT TITLES & MORE AT ALL GOOD HOBBY STORES!



# FEST HALL







# Q & A WITH FAINTING GOAT GAMES

Interview with Mike Lafferty of Fainting Goat Games:

## **1. Tell us a little about yourself and how did you get into gaming?**

I've been gaming since the 1980s. Cut my teeth on D+D Basic, Star Frontiers, MSH box set and Starfleet Battles.

## **2. Where did the name "Fainting Goat Games" come from?**

There's a great bar in Denver by the name of the Fainting Goat. (voted Best Irish Bar in Denver - how's that for faint praise. No pun intended.) Loved the name. Decided to steal it.

## **3. Just who are the people behind the scenes at Fainting Goat Games?**

Myself (Mike Lafferty) as publisher and sometimes writer. Jon Gibbons, Dan Houser and Adrian Smith are our primary artists and layout guys. But we get quite a bit of art from Scott Harshbarger and Jacob Blackmon as well. Jessica McDevitt also helps out with backgrounds.

We've got a deep slate of writers as well. Joe Bardales, Jason Tondro, John Post, Walt Robillard and Steve Perrin write quite a bit for us. We've also been very lucky to have Steve Kenson contribute to a few of our products.

## **4. How long has the company been in business?**

We're coming up on 2 years.

## **5. What is your latest product?**

Our latest product is Stark City - it's a city guide book and a setting development toolkit for the ICONS RPG.

## **6. What do you have currently in development?**

Currently, we're working on Extreme Earth. It's an Iron Age (as in the 90 era of comics) setting for ICONS, BASH, Fate Accelerated Edition, SUPERS!, M&M3E and Bulletproof Blues.

## **7. Has Kickstarter been essential to Fainting Goat's success?**

Almost all of our products have been financed by kickstarter or indiegogo campaigns. Crowdfunding is literally our primary cashflow with actual rpg sales being secondary.

## **8. What other game or game(s) would you like to see the company develop in the future.**

I'd love to do a card or board game. A dream project has been an urban fantasy set in the 1930s - that might be a good fit for Savage Worlds. Been toying with the idea of a supers-themed racing boardgame.

## **9. On a personal level what is your favorite type of game or genre of game?**

I burned out on the fantasy genre at a young age. So, supers are my genre of choice. Preferably rules-light and light-hearted in tone.

## **10. If you were a die, what die would you be and why?**

one of the plastic dice from the old D+D or MSH box set that you had to color in with a crayon to see the numbers. We're quirky, we're fun and hopefully when you play our games you feel a little like a kid again.





## EXTREME EARTH

A Multi-System Dystopian Superhero Setting  
Artwork and Original Concept by JON GIBBONS  
Written by JOE BARDALES  
Published by FAINTING GOAT GAMES

Imagine a world on the brink of chaos. A world where natural disasters, human conflict, corporate greed, and mass paranoia shape the day-to-day lives of the 7 billion people who call the Earth home. Genetic manipulation and mutation has altered the human genome bringing forth an influx of unusual men and women who possess strange and powerful talents. Advancements in scientific discoveries, mutated viruses, and international terrorist organizations now affect the daily lives of the population.

### Welcome to Extreme Earth....

EXTREME EARTH is a new tabletop roleplaying campaign setting inspired by the Iron Age of Comic Books. Set in a dark, dystopian world that isn't too hard to envision within the realm of possibility, EXTREME EARTH takes our world and imagines what it would be like if suddenly some people developed Super Talents (superpowers) in a world with far fewer natural resources than our own. It then adds a layer of paranoia and corruption that affects all levels of society, which in turn leads to conflicts that further expend those limited resources. It blurs the lines between

government, corporations, and the media. Every nation, every government, every corporation, every individual is out for themselves. It is a dangerous world where combat can be deadly even for those who possess Super Talents, and flawed heroes must face moral dilemmas and ethical quandaries every single day.

The EXTREME EARTH CAMPAIGN SETTING will be available in multiple editions for the BASH!, Bulletproof Blues, Fate Accelerated Edition, ICONS, Mutants and Masterminds, and SUPERS! rules systems. It will present information about the history and current state of affairs of this dystopian world, background dossiers on major players and organizations, rules for character creation (including a pre-generated team of playable characters known as THE WOLFPACK so you can start playing right away), campaign advice for game masters to help bring the EXTREME EARTH setting to life, and a full introductory adventure. In addition, the book will be heavily art intensive with a focus on functional artwork that can be used as player handouts at the gaming table.

The EXTREME EARTH CAMPAIGN SETTING Kickstarter will be launching in November 2013! Available in both PDF eBook and Print-on-Demand in full color from RPGNow.





# Q&A WITH OBATRON PRODUCTIONS

## 1) Tell us about Obatron Productions, how you got started and what you hope to do.

Vickey: I'd been doing freelance work with another RPG publisher more or less learning the ropes when I started thinking I wanted to go another direction. Around the same time, my husband, Bob, had been contemplating a fantasy setting with a twist. While he was just thinking we'd try a ransom model for a product and see how it goes, I saw it as the opportunity to strike out on our own.

I wrapped up my obligations with the other company, worked with Bob to figure out what we'd want to do with a company, and got to work on our first setting, Tunse'al. In the future, we plan to do additional RPG settings and launch two other branches of the company. One is Express Lines, a service catering to other RPG publishers, and Obatron Fiction.

## 2) What is Tunse'al? How did it come about?

Vickey: Tunse'al is a tribal fantasy setting on a planet that is most definitely not Earth. There are no humans, societies don't exactly mirror ours, magic is nature- and divinity-based, and thousands of miles of untamed lands separate the five Great Tribes. We say that honor is everything, money does not exist, and the world really is out to get you.

It was really Bob's brainchild, so pinning down exactly how it came about is nigh impossible! What I can tell you is that what started as traditional fantasy morphed in ways neither of us envisioned. The world that evolved was one with none of the iconic fantasy races, an atmosphere where the environment plays a major role in people's lives, great reptilian beasts are both boon and bane, fear of divine punishment keeps anything to do with metals repressed, and distances between geographical regions offers an array of first encounters similar to the concept of first contact in sci-fi settings.



What if you wanted to meet the exotic races, trek the wild lands, and encounter the ferocious beasts your tribe's songs tell you of?

Maybe you feel the need to find the fabled Barshen Ruins to see for yourself what brought the demise of the first Tunse'al people.

Perhaps you crave an escape from the drudgery of your everyday life: the same faces, the same chores, the same options. You want the challenge of mastering nature's magic through Na'hi'mana. Or the thrill of first contact with other tribes. No -- the adrenaline rush that comes with tempting the Fae!

With Tunse'al, you can craft an adventure that is far from the ordinary. As a player, choose any of four non-human races to discover the secrets of a continent

## 3) What is Obatron Fiction and how does it fit in with the RPG?

Vickey: Obatron Fiction is on the schedule to be launched in 2014. It will be a place where we can publish fiction related to Tunse'al or any RPG setting we develop subsequently. But that isn't its exclusive purpose, nor was it even what we originally intended it to be for. However, I do have a Tunse'al piece I've started. When I finally finish that, it'll get released via Obatron Fiction. It might end up being the first thing we have out!

We will also publish poetry and prose in horror, fantasy, science fiction, and cross-over genres. We often hear GM's talk about what inspires them to create compelling campaigns. The answer frequently includes reading fiction in their favorite genres. We're planning on digital and print-on-demand releases.

## 4) What is Express Lines and who would use it?

Vickey: We plan to run the Express Lines branch similar to a temp service for RPG publishers. They will be able to come to us for a variety of functions related to publishing RPG material. Express Lines will offer writing, editing, and proofreading to start. It's possible that we'll expand it to include layout, illustration, and art direction and even marketing if the need is there. We already have a roster of editors and writers who we've vetted and are ready to work as soon as we launch. We also have contacts we trust for the other functions. The difference between us and a temp service is that a company isn't hiring a particular person; they're hiring another company who is responsible for making sure the work is done no matter which people are doing the actual tasks. But like a temp service, the company doesn't deal with paying the workers; we will.

of thousands of miles, incredible sites, and unyielding environmental conditions.

As a game master, devise plots as simple as surviving rites of passage or as complex as trade wars designed to distract and divide while one tribe tries to take over entire swaths of land and control all who fall to its power.

Brought to you by Obatron Productions, Tunse'al is a tribal fantasy setting for use with Savage Worlds or adapted to any other system with our Systemless version of products.

Available now: *Tunse'al Setting Guide*, *Tunse'al Player's Guide*, and *Tunse'al Quick Starts and Side Tracks*.

Coming soon: *Usiku River*, *Caravan of Troubles*, *Seeds of Destruction*.

Find them at [www.obatron.com](http://www.obatron.com).

**5) Tunse'al currently supports Savage World and has a systemless book. Are there any plans to embrace other systems?**

Vickey: We're open to other systems, but don't have any plans to expand at the moment. I have a colleague who has offered to help us create a FATE version in exchange for us doing work for him, but we've not revisited that brief conversation, yet. If someone were to ask us to do something in particular and the license wasn't a pain, we'd consider it.

**6) You Kickstarted Tunse'al Quick Start and Side Tracks. What did you learn from your crowdfunding experience?**

Vickey: Where do I even start? Well, that would be one thing I learned from it: figuring out where to start. I'd actually managed another company's crowdfunding before doing ours, so I had a head start. Still, one thing I wish I had been able to get a firmer grasp on is how in the world to build an audience for something that hasn't happened. That's tough. Also, if you're mailing stuff, pad postage costs by 50% at least; you never know just when or by how much the post office is going to jack up rates, especially for international shipping. We charged for out of country packages, but even with padding 15%, it wasn't enough in the end.

**7) Have you pledged to other Kickstart campaigns? If so, which would be the furthest project from your own and why did you support it?**

Vickey: Oh, absolutely! Between my account - the one we used for our Kickstarter - and Bob's and with my accounts on other crowdfunding platforms (IndieGoGo, GoFundMe, etc.), we probably have backed more than 50. Three are probably equally far from ours. One was the 3Doodler. I backed it

because it was just such a cool concept. If we hadn't have just downsized significantly, I probably would have backed high enough to get some of the actual product. Another was Happy Canes because I think we should encourage older people to be creative and have fun. The last was a project of portraits of same-sex military couples, which I backed because I believe pictures really are worth a thousand words and those pictures have stories to tell and divides to bridge.

**8) What for you is the purpose of Free RPG day?**

Vickey: It's an opportunity to get Tunse'al out in front of people who might not normally try something that isn't traditional fantasy. It's also a chance to get retailers to take a look at an indie product they might otherwise never see. Our hope was that we'd get some retailers interested in carrying the Tunse'al line and gain some new fans in the consumer market.

**9) Is the future of RPGs digital first? (PDF/ePub/mobi before print)**

Vickey: From what I'm seeing today, yes. But the future isn't "now," so we'll work toward a point where we can be in mass distribution as well as offer convention sales.

**10) What's in the future of Obatron Productions?**

Vickey: We'll continue to add items to the Tunse'al product line. We've got supplements coming out over the next several months. We've got Caravan of Troubles, Usiku River, Edge of Destruction, a revised version of A Cause to Die For, and then some items that aren't even fully sketched, yet. Plus, we're always scheming, so the chances that we'll eventually do completely different settings are pretty much 100%. In fact, I have a modern piece I did for Savage Insider, that I'll brush up a bit and release by the end of first quarter 2014.



Setting Guide



Quick Starts & Side Tracks



Player's Guide



Setting Guide



Quick Starts & Side Tracks



Player's Guide

Enter the world of Tunse'al, a vast land populated by five distinct Great Tribes, towering reptilian beasts, exotic creatures, mysterious plants, and the reclusive Fae.

Explore the harsh environments from swamp to desert and from jungle to the fog of The Headlands with expansive mountains connecting it all.

Honor is Everything. Money Does Not Exist and the World Really is Out to Get YOU!

Play any of four non-human races in Savage Worlds or any other system and see where the journey leads!

Obatron

YouTube

f

Twitter

g+

Available online at [www.obatron.com!](http://www.obatron.com!)



# FRIENDS

## BELL & SCROLL



**JST3P.COM**



[www.RollDiceTakeNames.com](http://www.RollDiceTakeNames.com)

## CONCENTRIC CIRCLE



**STORM-CON**



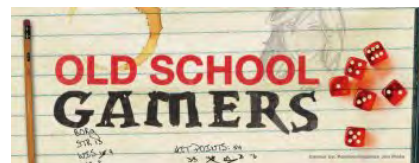
MERCHANTS' GUILD



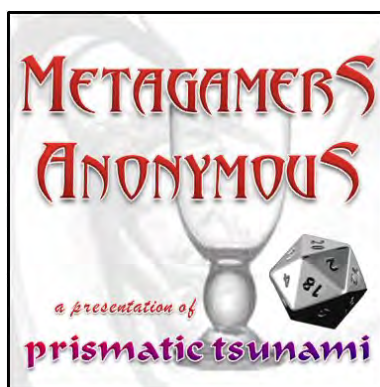
RPG COMMUNITY  
ALLIANCE



TREE OF TRIBES



## TALKING DRUMS





# Q&A WITH ELDRITCH ENTERPRISES

**Have you any new projects on the horizon or recently released via Eldritch Enterprises you'd like to mention?**

I just wrapped up the manuscript for my sequel to Snakeriders of the Aradondo, and am beginning preliminary work on the first of a series I plan to do under the banner of TimePortals©.

I enjoy being Contributing Editor at Gygax Magazine; I get to reach out to all my old friends from the business.

I had not planned to go back to the Island, but after talking to some folks that had played it, and letting a few of the generally positive reviews I got go to my head, not to mention Chris Clark beating me over the head with "Sequels!", "Three story arc!" and the like, I said sure, why not? I am pleased with it and have set a hook at the end for a third and final Aradondo adventure.

But first I plan to do something very near and dear to my heart—the idea of historical/fantastical time travel into other cultures. Having been a history buff most of my life, a history teacher in the later stages of my life, and a historical gamer for over 50 years, I am going to blend it all together. The first one, The Mask of Cha'ak, is set in the twilight of the Mayan Golden Age. The players are transformed as they transit the portal so that they blend in where they are going. The PC's carry any advantages with them, but all the gods and monsters will be Mayan or Central American. Then I have two others in mide, but they will have to wait until after the 3rd Aradondo, and the sci-fi collaboration I am doing with Jim Ward, and the collaboration I will be doing with Frank Mentzer... lots to do.

**Are there any new RPG releases from competitors you've taken a shine to?**

First, Eldritch does not have any plans to create the next great system, so we have no RPG competition. We do have some friendly competition with other makes of RPG playing aids.

One new conventional RPG (I use that term loosely) that I really admire is Joe Goodman's Dungeon Crawl Classics. It is firing up gamers all over the hobby and creating a lot of buzz, and hiring a couple of my friends to write for them.

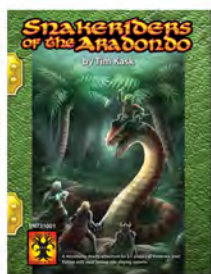
What I would consider a very un-conventional RPG that I admire is Mice & Mystics, by Plaid Hat. It may be played on a board, but it needs to be role-played just as much as the games that use lots of scenery and figures. I like any game that makes you look at gaming from a new angle.

**How difficult has it been to adjust to changing formats and technologies associated with RPGs?**

I haven't changed. I consider myself to be one of the architects of what is now called old school and have no desire to change. I ignore most of all that; I don't even need figs on the table, but let the players have them if they mean a lot to their enjoyment.

**What's your opinion of Kickstarter and other group-funding sites (Like / Hate / Sliced bread can't compare)?**

I am not planning one any time soon. I have supported a very few. I can't wait to get all 27 pounds of my Designer's Edition OGRE. Some folks have successfully funded and successfully fulfilled their pledges. Too many have not, and stuck it to their



**Eldritch**  
Frank Mentzer  
Tim Kask

[www.eldritchent.com](http://www.eldritchent.com)

It's about  
the adventure,

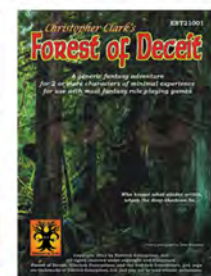


**Enterprises**

James M. Ward  
Christopher Clark

Find us on facebook!

It's not about  
the rules you use.



backers. Caveat emptor...

**Of all the products that affected the gaming industry, what could we have done without?**

Magic the Gathering. It started as a sucker's bet, sucked the air right out of the RPG community, sucked up way, way more money than it should have and became yet another weird, obsessive thing "gamers" did. I don't equate card-only games with wargames. To make matters worse, it spawned hordes of really crappy imitations.

**Do you have a favorite moment when you realized the greatest satisfaction from your influence on RPG's?**

I have a stereotype that repeats often, and I had an AHA! Moment one time that made me feel warm and fuzzy all over.

The repeater is all the gamers that have come up to me and thanked us for a means by which socially awkward people met others, found friends and lost their social awkwardness. And it also apparently kept a lot of them out of trouble.

The AHA came in a darkened theatre watching the second LotR movie. It struck me that back in '75, Gary, Dave, Brian, Rob, Terry, and I cleared the trees, pulled the stumps and sowed that first field. That field was playing out in front of me in a movie so cool I could not have imagined it in '75. It was the gamers we exposed back in the day that bought all those Harry Potter books for their kids or grandkids. We made fantasy cool and mainstream.

**Looking back on your body of work, is there anything you would have done differently?**

I'd like one last chance to re-work psionics.

**Which character you've created has secured its place as your favorite and why?**

The character would be Jaroo Ashstaff, although when I played him in tests, particularly the village of Hommlet, he was Tim, the Lusty Druid, also known as The Druid of the Grove. They made up bawdy songs and attributed them to Jaroo.

The monster will always be the bulette (boo-LAY). So many DM's have told me that their characters wet themselves at the mere mention of them that I know I did it right.

**I've become acquainted with several young individuals striking out to create new settings, fictions, & rules systems; do you have advice for the fledglings?**

Forget trying to write the next great RPG—the field is way too crowded as it is. Spend your creative time making new worlds and writing amazing adventures. Create entire worlds to play on; make new challenges. Quit trying to create new monsters simply for the sake of new monsters. A challenging adventure does not require esoteric and exotic monsters; giant crocodiles are plenty scary if you're in a boat or on a raft. Do something nobody has tried.

## ELDRITCH ENTERPRISES

In 2010, Frank Mentzer, Tim Kask, James M. Ward and Christopher Clark got together and formed Eldritch Enterprises. With more than 100 years of combined experience creating, designing, and writing, role playing games, the company was formed to produce those ideas and designs that had been developed over the years, but that had never been published. Over the course of the decades these four have been in the industry, this amounts to a fairly large pile of material.

Currently, Eldritch has produced 13 titles: Snakeriders of the Aradondo and Curse of the Weaver Queen from Tim Kask, Tower of the Scarlet Wizard and Monty Haul's Lesser Tower of Doom from James M. Ward, Dark Outpost and Dark Visitor, two science fiction adventures/mini-campaigns authored by both James Ward and Christopher Clark, Strange Allies and Forest of Deceit from Christopher Clark, and four full adventures: The Case of the Missing Magic, Quondam Fount, and the first two installments of his mega dungeon, Lich Dungeon Level One and Level Two from Frank Mentzer.

In addition, all four designers participated in a fiction anthology entitled Heroes and Magic that is available in paperback.

Many further releases are in the works; including three more levels from Frank for Lich Dungeon, a second adventure in the Aradondo from Tim, several more Monty Haul adventures from James Ward, and a third adventure from Chris in the Forest of Deceit series. Tim and James are also working on the third 'Dark' release, Dark Colony, for the science fiction product line. "We're not 100% 'up to speed' as yet," Chris commented. "We hope to produce eight or more products each year."

The members of Eldritch are both fans of most role playing systems, and fans of no particular role playing system. Tim Kask put it best. "It's about the role playing, not the rules. We just want to get people gaming again." This philosophy is shared by all the partners, and has become the guiding rule for the company.

As a result, all Eldritch adventures are non-system specific and contain generic statistics for ready conversion to most role playing game systems. All of these products are currently available in both soft cover print and pdf formats. Hardcover editions are also planned, as are several e-reader formats for these products. You can always see what is 'currently on the drawing board' by visiting <http://www.eldritchent.com> or the Eldritch Enterprises Facebook page. Comments welcome!



# CREDITS

The following people have worked tirelessly during the last 24 months in organizing AetherCon and as such deserve a mention for their time and efforts in this regard.

## CONVENTION STAFF

### Event Coordinator

Promotional Coordinator  
Assistant Promotional Coordinator  
Convention Program Editor in Chief  
Proofreader  
Convention Program Layout  
Website Design  
Logo Design

### Technical Coordinator

Technical Coordinator Assistant  
Database Technician  
Database Assistant  
Technical Advisor  
Technical Advisor  
Technical Advisor  
Technical Advisor  
Technical Advisor

### RPG Coordinator

Pathfinder Online Captain

### Vendors Hall Coordinator

Prize Support Wrangler

### Fest Hall Coordinator

Guest Coordinator  
Assistant Guest Coordinator  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host  
Panel Host

### Stephen J. Holodinsky

Barry Lewis  
Anthony Morris  
Danelle Laney  
Iain McGregor  
Bryan Hitchcock  
Will Hammerand  
Patrick McEvoy

### R.M Stout

Ray Brooks  
Will Hammerand  
June Garcia  
John Brese  
Jason Heath  
Kai Mayer  
Javier Palenzuela  
Cody Stewart

### Stephen J. Holodinsky

Jesse R Davis

### Curtis Baum

Jason Yarnell

### Erik Evjen

Owen KC Stephens  
Jim Butler  
Rone Barton  
Mark Carroll  
Jeff Dee  
Erik Evjen  
Alyssa Faden  
Jon Gibbons  
Ed Healy  
Tim Kask  
Mick Leach  
Chris Malidore  
Jeremy McHugh  
Darryl Mott Jr  
Javier Palenzuela  
Walt Robillard  
Wes Schneider  
Matthew Solarz  
Christina Stiles

**Day of Event Coordinator**

Tavern Signage

**Artist's Enclave Coordinator**

Art Director

Artist

Artist

Artist

Artist

Artist

Artist

Artist

Artist

Artist

Artist

Artist

Artist

Artist

**Captionizer**

**Melissa Volkmann**

A. F. de Cardozo

**Danelle Laney**

Stephen J. Holodinsky

Pierre Carles

Steve Ellis

Eric Lofgren

Chris Malidore

Britt Martin

Patrick McEvoy

Jeremy McHugh

Will O'Brien

Kai Ortmann

Jan Pospíšil

Emerson Ward

David Michael Wright

Kevin Yancey

**Andre Freitas Cardozo**

**ROLL20 DEV TEAM**

Riley Dutton

Lead Developer

Nolan T. Jones

Public Relations

Dylan Todd

Logo Design

Devin Night

Token Design

Jonathon Roberts

Map Design

**INFRNO DEV TEAM**

Mike Muldoon





*Watch for the next AetherCon*  
*November 14-16, 2014*